

LTC13D040

Title: Partnerships Office Update October - January 2014
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Issue

An update on Partnerships Office activity from December 2013 to January 2014.

Recommendation

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to note the Partnerships Office activity from December 2013 to January 2014.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Further Information

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Background

The Learning and Teaching Committee receives a report at every meeting providing an update on Partnerships Office activity.

Discussion

1. **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY**

1.1 Development of an HE Ethos

A lunch time session was held on 10th December 2013 with senior managers from UEA's partner FE colleges to consider possible ways of supporting them in developing an HE Ethos. The session was attended by Dr Adam Longcroft, the Academic Director of Taught Programmes, along with David Aldous and Rebecca Westrup from the School of Education and Lifelong Learning whose research has focussed on relations between higher education institutions and partnership colleges. The attached paper (Appendix 1) includes some of the ideas which fed into discussions in the session.

The Partnerships Office will be following up with partner staff involved to determine the best way to take forward the actions identified.

1.2 New Academic Model Workshops

A series of workshops are being arranged with all partners, led by the Academic Director of Taught Programmes, on UEA's New Academic Model and implications for partners. The workshops are focussing on the principles behind the NAM and opportunities for these to be rolled out with partners. The first workshop for Easton&Otley College and City College Norwich was held on 10 January and workshops are planned with other partners throughout the academic year.

2. **UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SUFFOLK**

2.1. Joint Academic Committee

The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on Wednesday 6 November 2013 are available to view at

[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/ucsccommittees/Joint+Academic+Committee+\(JAC\)/2013-14/JAC+Unapproved+Minutes+06-11-2013](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/ucsccommittees/Joint+Academic+Committee+(JAC)/2013-14/JAC+Unapproved+Minutes+06-11-2013)

2.2 Review of Organisational Structure and Academic Portfolio

The UCS Board has announced plans for significant revisions to its organisational structures, academic portfolio and support services. The changes will be implemented in three phases. The first phase will involve the current organisational structure of five Schools supported by ten Divisions being replaced by two Faculties and seven Departments. This change is planned to be implemented by 1 August 2014.

The second phase of the review will consider the further development of UCS' academic portfolio. This review will commence in March 2014 with proposals being confirmed in early May 2014 and implemented thereafter.

The third phase will review support services. This is anticipated to begin in spring 2014 and continue beyond August.

3. CITY COLLEGE NORWICH

3.1 Joint Board of Study

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 22 November 2013 are available to view at:

[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/ccn/2013-14/CCNJBOS13M001+Minutes+--+FINAL+\(with+revised+links+2\)](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/ccn/2013-14/CCNJBOS13M001+Minutes+--+FINAL+(with+revised+links+2))

4. EASTON&OTLEY COLLEGE

4.1 Joint Board of Study

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 13 November 2013 are available to view at

[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/eastoncollege/2013-14/ECJBOS13M001+Minutes+\(with+hyperlinks+v2\)](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/eastoncollege/2013-14/ECJBOS13M001+Minutes+(with+hyperlinks+v2))

5. MOUNTVIEW ACADEMY OF THEATRE ARTS

5.1 Joint Board of Study

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 November 2013 are available to view at

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/mountview/2013-14/MTVJBOS13M001>

5.2 QAA Review

A QAA review for Specific Course Designation took place on 16 and 17 January. The outcome of the review will be reported to a future meeting.

6. INTO UEA (NORWICH AND LONDON)

6.1 Joint Board of Study

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16 November 2013 are available to view at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/intouea/2013-14/INTOJBOS13M001+--+FINAL>

7. LONDON ACADEMY OF DIPLOMACY

7.1 Joint Board of Study

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 7 November 2013 are available to view at

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/London+Academy+of+Diplomacy/2013-14/LADJBOS13M001+-+Minutes+v2>

7.2 LAD Assessment Workshop

The Academic Director of Taught Programmes led an assessment workshop at LAD on 6 December 2013. The workshop reviewed approaches to marking and considered best practice in terms of applying the UEA Senate marking scales to assessment of LAD students work.

8. INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE STUDIES, GUERNSEY

8.1 Joint Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 December 2013 are available to view at:

[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/guernsey/2013-14/IHSCSJC13M001+-+Minutes+4+Dec+13+-+FINAL+\(with+hyperlinks\)](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/partnerships/committeepapers/guernsey/2013-14/IHSCSJC13M001+-+Minutes+4+Dec+13+-+FINAL+(with+hyperlinks))

“Building knowledge across boundaries: Policy as lived experience within the FEHE context”

11th June 2012 at the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia

Conference Report

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1. Introduction

The aim of this preliminary report is to provide an overview of the discussions and thoughts that were generated based on the seminar day on the 11th June 2012. The focus of the day was to provide a sounding board for those within the FEHE community to develop some ideas with regards to the current context of relations and the ways in which these could be developed.

The context of FEHE relations are shifting, creating new spaces from which the identities of lecturers are becoming reshaped and repositioned (see also Avis, 2009; Mason et al., 2010). While many of these spaces (often contextualised around the discourses of risk and change) raise notes of caution and trepidation, they also present a number of opportunities from which to develop FEHE relations in a manner that constructively challenges and evolves the current context. Equally, while some opportunities have been articulated at a policy level (BIS, 2011; Bandias 2012), there is a focus emerging that specifically provides a space for the voice of lecturers to be heard.

Against this backdrop, the aim of the FEHE seminar day was to provide a space from which multiple (if not traditionally institutionally disparate) perspectives could be brought together in the interest of greater knowledge and understanding of the current issues that face the FEHE community. It was intended that this voice should shift beyond the well rehearsed rhetoric of performativity, assessment and teaching practice. While we acknowledge the fundamental importance of these, we also believe that they need to be shrouded in discourses and practices that revolve around themes such as creativity, imagination and scholarly practice. It was these hopes that originally guided the initiation of the FEHE seminar day and we hope that the FEHE seminar day can act as a catalyst to further develop relations on a more equal, multidimensional and sustainable basis.

In what follows, we present some of the key discussion points. Drawing on these, we outline and present suggestions for future developments and would encourage readers to reflect upon these suggestions so that others may also be developed.

2. Summary of key areas

As mentioned, the FEHE day was designed to allow members of the college and university community to meet informally and share common interests, practice and thoughts. The day was structured to inform, but also to give voice to a large range of lecturers and practitioners. In total, the response to the FEHE day was extremely positive with 41 attendees registering for the event. The event was structured around two keynote lectures and several workshop sessions. These focused on the themes of policy and experience. The workshop sessions were led by a variety of stakeholders, all of whom are either contributing to the FEHE community or who have expressed an interest in seeking to understand it further. Within all of the sessions, a key focus was to provide a window from which attendees could convey their own experiences and perspectives regarding FEHE policy and experience.

Analysis of these discussions and evaluations suggests this was a positive experience as it enabled colleagues to discuss and share views and exchange information. Crucially, the

analysis also highlighted emerging themes (please see Table 1 and Table 2). As outlined in Table 2, lecturers highlighted a tension between delivering HE courses and their changing positions in relation to students, employers and their institutions within the practice. Many commented that this influenced their professional identity and the ways in which they perceived themselves as a lecturer. Furthermore the analysis showed that there are a number of voices evident within institutional and employer voices regarding the content and delivery of courses. It appears that this tension between voices was also exacerbated by lecturers' limited access to space within the HE-FE community. In addition to administrative constraints such as timetabling, lecturers commented that they felt there was limited opportunity to carry out research and scholarly activities. Although time was considered a major factor they also suggested that there seemed to be a lack of recognition of the importance of research and scholarship within the community. Another key point raised during the discussions was concern for the impact that this may have on students and their perceptions of studying HE in FE. Set against these tensions, a central theme which underpinned many of the discussions was a desire for enhanced communication and relations between lecturers teaching within FE colleges and HEIs. Throughout the event, discussions highlighted the necessity of opportunities which promote dialogue and knowledge exchange and foster the development of a scholarly community.

Table 1: Table to illustrate key points arising from attendee evaluations

Question	Comments	Arising Themes
<p>What did you enjoy most about the seminar day?</p>	<p>Exposure to other regional HE-FE partnerships and an awareness of different ways of working</p> <p>Opportunity to meet colleagues outside of my own institution.</p> <p>Fantastic opportunity to network and share comments on good practice</p> <p>Provided an excellent insight into challenges faced by all of us and how those challenges are in some cases very similar and in others very different.</p> <p>This is an important and highly topical subject for discussion and information exchange.</p> <p>Being able to share our views in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>Voice</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>Exchange</p> <p>Support</p>

Question	Comments	Arising Themes
Future themes/matters arising?	<p>Practical strategies for advancing teaching and FE-HE relationships</p> <p>A regional event (weekend) to share current research activity and expertise [particularly qualitative methodologies]</p> <p>Workshops to develop: links between institutions/share resources/share good practice/Research network</p> <p>Planning proposals for research access to funding or sponsorship</p> <p>Exploring pedagogical differences in FE-HE</p> <p>Spin-off should be a community of practice.</p>	<p>Practical strategies (how and why)</p> <p>Regional events/workshops</p> <p>Sharing information & resources</p> <p>Community</p>

Table 2: Examples of arising themes within the discussion groups

Theme	Lecturers' perspectives
Access to Scholarly Space	
	<p><i>Physicality</i> There is limited space to study and carry out research due to administration and bureaucratic constraints.</p> <p><i>Shaping of identity</i> Some lecturers do not see themselves as 'scholars'.</p> <p><i>Of the student experience</i> Often within discussions of 'HEness' students' identities as learners are often lost. Students 'want more of an HE experience...they require/look for more 'HEness' - the way they're treated, have access to resources and they see this as part of their overall HE experience, that they are a HE student. They accept they're in a FE college...but it needs to be more HE'.</p>

Community /of Practice	
	<p><i>Limited opportunity for scholarship</i> In addition to physicality, lecturers also experience a tension between relationships within FE colleges delivering HE courses and opportunities to undertake scholarly activities.</p> <p><i>Changing Pedagogic Practices</i> Pedagogic practices are changing in response to changing student populations (vocational versus academic, demographic and EAL).</p> <p><i>Of the student experience</i> Some students experience academic and personal difficulties when undertaking the transition from FE to HE.</p> <p><i>Knowledge Exchange</i> Lecturers would like the opportunity to gain access to the knowledge beneath the disciplines to enhance subject expertise and pedagogic practices.</p> <p>In Europe vocationalism is linked to a more civic model and includes ideas of nation building and social justice.</p>
Voices and the community	
	<p><i>Situatedness</i> Lecturers felt their role was limited in terms of shaping the community but paradoxically had the role of mediating between employers, policy makers and professionals and the students.</p> <p><i>Voice of the employer</i> Employers are very important in terms of student recruitment and delivery of courses. Employers tend to tell FE what they want in terms of provision on courses and lecturers identified a tension between academic and vocational courses.</p>

Support	
	<p><i>Detachment</i> There is a need to support the developing community as some lecturers feel detached in terms of the development of courses.</p> <p><i>Of the student experience</i> It is essential to support the development of student experience as lecturers were aware that some students perceive HE in FE courses as a 'bolt on' and therefore not as serious as actually studying at an HEI.</p>
Strategies	
	<p><i>Time and recognition</i> Lecturers discussed the importance of time for scholarly activity. Time that is created, formalised and recognised.</p>

3. Proposed developments

Based on the preliminary discussions and analysis, we propose the following areas to begin to develop such a community:

1. Structural Developments;
2. Research and Scholarly Activity informed workshops;
3. Towards an East Region Research Community.

1. Structural Developments:

To have a sustainable community, focus needs to be initially placed on developing key elements of this infrastructure. To this end, we propose the following structures:

- a. FEHE Steering Group;
- b. FEHE Blogosphere

a. Steering Group:

The aim of the steering group would be to facilitate the proposed changes and to co-ordinate with individual colleges, providing open and continuous dialogue. Initially, the steering group would oversee the development of the research workshops. However, it is envisaged that as the number of topics grow, this will become self-sustainable. The

steering group will then primarily be responsible for the facilitation of the workshops and administrative responsibilities. To this end, the steering group will have the following responsibilities:

- To develop communications between FEHE institutions regarding research;
- Discuss and generate themes for initial workshops;
- To pursue avenues of funding streams;
- To co-ordinate the development of a FEHE research conference (provisionally May/June 2013).

b. FEHE Blogosphere

In order to ensure that there is regular and open communication, we have discussed the possibility of setting up a research blog. The aim of the blog would be to provide an open forum from which all members of the FEHE community could share and reflect on current developments and research interests. The use of this blog would be to generate further ideas and sources of discussion for the workshops. We hope that as the project evolves members of the FEHE community will continue to undertake responsibility for this.

2. FE-HE Research Workshops

Initially, a series of workshops would be developed to facilitate the development of the research community. As highlighted within the discussions from the seminar day, there is a need for both generic and discipline specific workshops. As such, the initial workshops would be based around the following areas:

- The role of theory in shaping our future;
- Writing research: different approaches to understanding;
- Doing research: An overview of some methodological approaches.

The workshops would be open to any member of the FEHE community and would last approximately two hours. Timing of these is crucial and we propose the consideration of weekend workshops. Eventually, workshops would be run once a month, focusing on themes that have been generated within the blog network. Additionally, we would also encourage academics beyond the community to deliver workshops based on their specific disciplines. The aim of these workshops would be to develop clusters of disciplinary based networks; enabling researchers to develop collaborations around specific research themes.

3. Future Developments: Towards an East Region Research Community (ERRC)

The structural foundations we have outlined are the basis for the creation of an East Region Research Community (ERRC). Based on similar community models (for example South-West UPC) our intention is to begin creating a dialogical community, founded on shared beliefs and common interests. The structure we have provided begins to do this at different levels so that we may interlink the development of this community with the continuing progression individual institutions are undertaking. The idea of a sustainable research community moves towards an open science approach; exploring new dynamics between FE-HE groups. In many respects, this starting point is an unbecoming so that a new becoming may be initiated. Accordingly, it is envisaged that this project will be five to

six years in its development and will require managerial level support and also streams of funding. An aspect of the structural developments is to seek methods and ways of doing this while also adhering to the values presented.

4. Final reflections

The FEHE seminar day is the starting point for creating a dialogical community, founded on shared beliefs and common interests. The structures we have proposed are considered, not as an alternative to the current system, but as a way of evolving current thinking, so that we may interlink our desired outcomes within sustainable and realistic means. Our proposed community is one founded on the basis of mutual understanding and different imaginations. Imaginations that are disciplined, providing structures and context of transmission. As highlighted, central to these developments are enhanced communication and the sharing of creativity and innovation within the FEHE community. What we propose is addressing these challenges together, providing possibilities in the creation and restructuring of knowledge boundaries.

The proposed community offers a decentralisation model of sustainable community relations. We do not envisage that UEA (or indeed any institution) shall remain central to the community. Rather, collectively we may develop a community that is non-profitmaking, collaborative, open and inclusive. We realise that in times of extreme performativity and accountability many of these ideals will be challenging. We must find a balance between living in the 'real' world but also seeing it in a very different way. For example, the acknowledgement of real world issues, day to day practicalities, is one that we have attempted to keep in mind. Thus, many of our initial proposals are framed around beginning to broaden our collective imaginations. However, based on the enthusiasm and interest shown from the day, such a position is not unachievable and it is hoped that this report and the ideas included will be the beginning of this process.

References

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Contacts

The following list includes colleagues who attended the seminar day and those who share an interest in developing a FEHE community within the Eastern Region.

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